



City of Edmonds Media Release

Development Services ~ 121 5th Ave N, Edmonds, WA 98020

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To: Media

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Tree Code Update: Dec. 9 Planning Board Public Hearing

Public invited to comment on draft tree regulations

(Edmonds, WA) The City of Edmonds' Planning Board will hold a public hearing on the Draft Tree Regulations Dec. 9 at 7 p.m. Information on the Tree Code Update, the Planning Board's review, and the draft tree regulations are available for review at treecode.edmondswa.gov.

The public is invited to participate in the public hearing via Zoom or by phone at:

<https://zoom.us/j/94704154660>

Via phone by dialing 253-215-8782

Meeting ID: 947 0415 4660

Passcode: 251948

Background

In 2019, the City of Edmonds adopted an [Urban Forest Management Plan](#) which included goals and policy guidance for tree retention within the City of Edmonds.

One of these goals was to "Update tree regulations to reduce clearcutting or other development impacts on the urban forest and consider changes to tree replacement requirements and penalties for code violations".

A frequent complaint related to tree removal in the city is when properties are developed or subdivided. The primary focus of this Tree Code update is to develop regulations that result in more trees being preserved when properties are developed and require replanting for the trees that are removed.

Under discussion now

The tree retention and replacement requirements will apply to subdivision applications, new multi-family development, new single-family development, and any tree removal not specifically exempted in the Tree Code.

The retention and replacement requirements do not apply to developed single family properties UNLESS they fall within critical areas.

Elements of the tree regulations include:

- the requirement that 30% of significant trees be retained within the development
- the replanting of up to three trees for each significant tree removed (replacement ratio determined by the diameter of the trees removed)
- a fee-in-lieu (a financial cost) provision when a site cannot support the number of required replacement trees

The draft regulations also implement low impact development principles and provide design flexibility for subdivisions to support tree retention.

The Tree Code also proposes to establish a City of Edmonds Tree Fund that can be funded by the fee-in-lieu provision for replacement trees, civil penalties for illegal tree cutting, donations, or other monies allocated by the City Council. The Tree Fund can be used to provide vouchers to Edmonds' residents for purchasing and planting trees on their property or acquiring and preserving wooded areas within the City.

Big picture

The Tree Code Update is a first step in implementing the Urban Forest Management Plan. In the future, the City will pursue incentives for property owners who retain trees on their property. This could include property tax rebates (applicable to the City portion of property taxes), stormwater utility fee reduction, and/or other techniques that provide financial recognition of the benefits of tree planting and protection.

The City is also in the process of updating its Street Tree Plan which is a plan for the trees located in the right-of-way.

If you have questions or comments on the tree code update email Kernen Lien, Environmental Programs Manager, at kernen.lien@edmondswa.gov.

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